

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AF-06 OPIC-03 SAM-01 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SCCT-01 SY-05 OPR-02 A-01 OC-05 CCO-00

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P R 271250Z SEP 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4412

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

LRUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5698

LE.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO, PINS

SUBJ: POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: LISBON MILITARY REGION ASSEMBLY, CHAIRED BY COPCON
COMMANDER GEN. CARVALHO, DEBATED CREATION OF AMI SEPT 26.
ALTHOUGH OFFICIAL SPOKESMAN HAVE DENIED THAT AMI WILL BE
"SECOND COPCON" IT IS ALREADY CLEAR THAT AMI WILL ASSUME MAJOR
ROLE IN ASSURING PUBLIC ORDER. IMPACT OF CREATION OF AMI ON FUTURE
OF OTELO AND ARMY CHIEF FABIAO IS STILL UNCLEAR. PROTESTS
AGAINST CONDEMNATION OF SPANISH TERRORISTS RESULTED IN SACKING OF
SPANISH EMBASSY AND CONSULATE ON SEPT 27 AND BURNING OF CONTENTS
IN STREET. COSTA GOMES DEPARTED ON STATE VISIT TO POLAND AND
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MOSCOE SEPT27. END SUMMARY.

1. REACTION TO AMI: AFM ASSEMBLY OF UNIT DELEGATES (ADU) OF LISBON MILITARY REGION MET AFTERNOON SEPT 26 TO CONSIDER, INTER ALIA, DECISION OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL ESTABLISHING MILITARY INTERVENTION GROUP (AMI). ASSEMBLY WAS PRESIDED OVER BY COPCON COMMANDER GE. OTELO SARAIVA DE CARVALHO IN HIS CAPACITY AS REGIONAL MILITARY COMMANDER FOR LISBON. STATEMENT ISSUED FOLLOWING MEETING NOTED TERESELY THAT PROBLEM OF CREATION OF AMI WAS DISCUSSED AND THAT COPCON, AS LEADING MILITARY ORGANIZATION FOR STRUGGLE AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES, WAS GIVEN VOTE OF CONFIDENCE. OTELO SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD PRESS THAT COPCON WOULD HENCEFORTH RESTRICT ITS ACTIVITIES TO ACTION AGAINST COUNTER-REVOLUTIONARIES WHILE AMI CONCENTRATED ON MATTERS RELATIVE TO CIVIL ORDER. COMMUNIST-DOMINATED MEDIA, MEANWHILE, HAS INCREASED TEMPO OF ITS ATTACKS AGAINST BG MELO EGIDIO, SEEKING TO DISCREDIT AMI COMMANDER BY LINKING HIS SERVICE IN MOZAMBIQUE WITH ACTIVITIES OF WHITE MERCENARIES THERE.

2. ANTI-SPANISH PROTESTS: RESPONDING TO RADICAL UDP CALL TO PROTEST SPANISH GOVERNMENT'S DECISIONS TO PROCEED WITH EXECUTION OF FIVE BASQUE AND LEFTIST TERRORISTS, SEVERAL THOUSAND PEOPLE ATTACKED THE SPANISH EMBASSY, CONSULATE, AND CULTURAL CENTER IN LISBON NIGHT OF SEPT 26-27. ALL THREE BUILDINGS WERE OCCUPIED BY DEMONSTRATORS AND THEIR FURNISHINGS BURNED IN STREET. CHANCERY ITSELF WAS SET AFIRE. NO INJURIES TO SPANISH STAFF WERE REPORTED. STREET PROTESTS WERE ECHOED ON OFFICIAL LEVEL SAME DAY WHEN FORMIN MELO ANTUNES, CALLED IN SPANISH AMBASSADOR TO MAKE FORMAL GOP REQUEST TO SPANISH GOVERNMENT THAT TERRORISTS BE SPARED.

3. VIOLENCE: A LARGE QUANTITY OF PLASTIC EXPLOSIVES AND DETONATORS WAS SEIZED, AND TWO YOUTHS GUARDING IT ARRESTED, BY MILITARY UNITS IN SEPT 26 RAID IN COLARES (25 MILES WEST OF LISBON). AUTHORITIES BELIEVE EXPLOSIVES FROM CACHE WERE USED IN SEVERAL RECENT INCIDENTS INCLUDING SEPT 24 EXPLOSION OF AN AUTOMOBILE IN MONSANTO PARK IN LISBON. LISBON PRESS, NOTING THAT EXPLOSIVES OF SAME TYPE USED IN RECENT LISBON BOMBINGS FOR WHICH ELP HAS CLAIMED CREDIT, SPECULATED CACHE BELONGED TO ELP. IN FUNCHAL, MADEIRA, SMALL BOMB SEPT 24
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DESTROYED CAR OF LOCAL FEC-ML LEADER.

4. PRESIDENT DEPARTS: PRESIDENT COSTA GOMES DEPARTED SEPT 27 FOR ONE-WEEK TRIP TO POLAND USSR. FOREIGN MINISTER MELO ANTUNES, COPCON COMMANDER CARVALHO, AND OTHER MEMBERS OF REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL WERE AT AIRPORT TO SEE PRESIDENT OFF. MELO ANTUNES, WHO HAD PLANNED TO TRAVEL WITH PRESIDENT, REPORT-EDLY REMAINED BEHIND SEVERAL DAYS TO COMPLETE WORK ON PROPOSALS

FOR PRESENTATION AT OCT 6-7 MEETING WITH EEC. FONMIN DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS, WHO IS WORKING CLOSELY WITH MELO ANTUNES ON THESE PROPOSALS, TOLD AMBASSADOR SEPT 26 THAT PROPOSALS WOULD PROBABLY NOT BE READY IN TIME FOR SCHEDULED MEETING.

5. COMMENT: DESPITE OFFICIAL DENIALS (INCLUDING ONE BY RC SPOKESMAN VASCO LOURENCO) THAT MI WILL BE A "SECOND COPCON" IT IS CLEAR THA AMI WILL ASSUME IMPORTANT INTERNAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC ORDER FUNCTIONS PREVIOUSLY ASSIGNED TO COPCON. INCLUDED AMONG AMI'S "PUBLIC ORDER" RESPONSIBILITIES PRESUMABLY WILL BE RESPONDING TO PUBLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF INDISCIPLINE SUCH AS RECENT SUV DEMONSTRATION IN LISBON. WE UNDERSTAND OPERATIONAL FORCES COMMITTED TO AMI WILL INCLUDE UNITS FROM COMMANDOS, MARINES AND PRATROOPERS. NAVY AND AIR FORCE UNITS, WHICH WERE WITHDRAWN FROM COPCON CONTROL DURING LAST DAYS OF GONCALVES GOVERNMENT, WILL NOW AGAIN BE AVAILABLE FOR INTERNAL SECURITY ASSIGNMENTS, ASSUMING THERE IS NO A WILL TO USE THEM.

6. WHAT IMPACT CREATION OF AMI WILL HAVE ON FORTUNES OF OTELO AND ARMY CHIEF FABIAO IS STILL NOT CLEAR. UNCERTAIN PERFORMANCE OF COPON IN PAST AND FABIAO'S INDECISIVENESS IN DEALING WITH DISCIPLINE QUESTION, HOWEVER, HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO LOWERING OF INFLUENCE AND PRESTIGE OF BOTH MEN WITHIN AFM AND PUBLIC AT LARGE.

7. EXECUTIONS OF TERRORISTS MAY SPARK MORE VIOLENCE HERE AND WILL PLACE GREATER STRAINS ON ALREADY DIFFICULT SPANISH-PORTUGUESE RELATIONS.
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